

Education cutbacks slice into LAUSD adult education

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LOS ANGELES (KABC) -- Recent years have seen huge cuts to the Los Angeles school system, and there are likely more coming. The adult education program that serves more than 250,000 people is at risk.

Karla Couto is a second-language teacher advisor at Van Nuys Adult Community School. Couto is concerned her school maybe shutting its doors.

It is one of 24 adult community schools the district is considering eliminating. The cuts would affect more than 255,000 adult education students in Los Angeles, mainly high school dropouts looking to earn their general-education diplomas (GEDs), those learning English as a second language, and others.

"Our school alone here at Van Nuys is the third largest," said Couto. "Last year we served 14,000 students."

"Every day these students come with hope that there's really going to be a better future here in America. Cutting the 174 million [dollars], which is apparently the budget for adult education, is going to have a huge impact with the whole entire Los Angeles," said Resurreccion Angeles, an assistant principal.

School district officials say given that the district has been in a budget crisis for years, it has only gotten worse, leaving adult community schools and more in jeopardy.

"We've cut \$2 billion in the last three years," said LAUSD Superintendent John Deasy. "We have a \$560-million hole, another half-a-billion dollars next year. This is a revenue issue. There is nothing left to cut. So the answer is very simple: Yes, every program is under the gun."

School district officials say that includes the possible elimination of 473 early-childhood education centers or preschools in the district, schools that educate 32,000 children. Officials say the district cannot slash enough to make up for state cuts to education.

"The state of California has chosen a legacy of prison investment and a legacy of public-school disinvestment," said Deasy. "We're at the point where that no longer is tolerable. So we'll be coming out with a budget next month that will let the people understand exactly what is going to go away."

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